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EXPANDING COMMUNICATIONS IN NORTHWEST CHINA

The Wu-tu to Auang-yuan section of the Szechwan-Kansu highway in China is an important link between the northwest and the southwest and is of great value for both military and economic purposes. Surveying will soon be completed and construction started next year. Preparations have already begun. This is an important project for the 7th District Highway Office, and which is also in charge of building the big bridge over the Rua Chiang at Pao-chi on the Szechwan-Shensi highway. The piers can be finished in cold weather and if funds are forthcoming, the mont will be completed by the end of February 1949. The greatest problem in northwest transportation is the lack of tires. More than 380 sets which were bought in Shang-hai and Han-k'on are being brought to Lan-chou by land and air transport.

After Outer Mongolia became independent, Mationalist forces entered and occupied barren Ma-tsung Shan for purposes of national defense and to protect the Ho-hai corridor. Ma-tsurg Shan, north of the Edsingol Banner, adjoins Outer Mongolia and on the south touches Chin-t's and Ting-hain of Kansu, thus being a rempart of the Ho-hai corridor. This region encloses well-watered spots, natural grazing-grounds with well-developed herding, long desired by the Outer Mongolians. This region is prorly connected with the interior of China, and if the unexpected should happen, there would be ac way of giving help, and the Ho-hsi corridor would be seriously threatened. Therefore, the Ho-hsi Garrison Commander has determined to build a highway from Chiu-ch'uan to the Eisingol Banner.

On 1 August 1945, the Northwest Highway Bureau of the Ministry of Communications set up an engineer's office and began surveying this route, dividing it into three sections. From Sha-men-tzu in Chin-t'a, Kansu, northward, where all is desert, the work was more difficult and costly. Thanks to the cooperation of local people and the army engineer corps, the work was completed in the rough by the end of 1946, and vehicles could get through.

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Thionath as defense army is a lometers long, and has been named the Chin-chien highway. From Chin tuen northward it follows the Pei-ta Ho, crosses the Lin Sha, passes Called a, and arrives at Chin-t'a. Thence it follows the Main Coi northward to Sha-men-tzu in Chin-t'a, enters the Edsingol Banner in Mingsia, follows the Edsin Col northward, massas Chianan, T'ab-ho Lang-hein Shan, Hai-mico and reaches its terminus, Chien-kuo-ying.

Topographically, the road may be divided into the following sections:
(1) the stretch from Caint-shivan to Ech-san in Chin-t'a, a distance of 36 kilometers is a farming region, producing chiefly millet; twelve kilometers of the foundils of Chia San are barren. The remaining land once contained lakes, but is now alkaline and unfertile. In the past, it has been irrigated from the Pel-ta Ho, but insufficiently. With the completion of the Su-feng Canal and the Yuan-yang Reservoir last year this problem has been solved.
(2) From Erh-teni north for 200 kilometers there is barren desert.

The entire highway is now finished. Regular traffic has begun on the section from Chiv-ch'uan to Chin-t'a, and vehicles will soon try the remainder of the 'ine. The building of this road has little economic value, but it is very important to national defense. It unites the Edsingol Banner and Ho-hsi, so that the Banner is no longer isolated.

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